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ITHACA, N.Y.  
CORNELL

More than 200 people gathered Tuesday at the Cornell University campus to protest United States covert activities in Central America, resulting in the arrest of 20 people, university officials said.

Eighteen university students, a Cornell employee and one Ithaca resident were arrested by campus security for blocking the door to an office used by the Central Intelligence Agency to conduct job interviews.

Campus police charged them with violating campus conduct codes after they blocked the doorway to an office being used a CIA employee to interview prospective recruits.

Officials said the Ithaca resident, James Lowenstein, 26, was charged by city police with criminal trespass. Cornell officials refused to identify the other 19 protesters.

Chanting "U.S.A.- CIA, out of Nicaragua," the group braved freezing temperatures as they stood in front of Willard Straight Hall, the student union.

There was no violence as security personnel escorted the group from Barnes Hall to a waiting bus, which took them to the Public Safety offices for processing, witnesses said.

"They were given an explanation of the rules that apply to demonstrations," said University Relations Director Gilbert Goetz.

The demonstrators, said Goetz, were told they have the right to protest, but they are not permitted to prevent access to a building.

The students must appear before a judicial administrator for further disciplinary action.

The minimal penalty for blocking access to a building would be a written reprimand, with the maximum penalty dismissal from the university, said Roger Segelken, a writer in the Cornell News Bureau.

The 20 people were taken into custody after Dean of Students David Drinkwater ordered the group to clear a path for people to enter and exit the Career Center office.

"You've got a policy about doors but not about murder," one student said in response to Drinkwater's order.